

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE  
TO H. RES. 147  
OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY**

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas the United States Department of State's 2012 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2012, states that Iran's most egregious human rights problems were the government's severe limitations on civil liberties, including the freedoms of assembly, speech, and press, and the government's disregard for the physical integrity of persons whom it arbitrarily and unlawfully killed, tortured, and imprisoned;

Whereas in September 2012, Saeed Abedini, a Christian and resident of the State of Idaho with dual Iranian–United States citizenship, was arbitrarily detained in the Islamic Republic of Iran, held in solitary confinement, physically beaten, denied access to necessary medical treatment for months, and denied access to his lawyer until just before his trial;

Whereas in January 2013, an Iranian court accused Saeed Abedini of attempting to undermine the national security of Iran by gathering with fellow Christians in private homes;

Whereas Saeed Abedini was tried in a non-public trial before a judge who had been sanctioned by the European Union for repeated violations of human rights, including issuing long prison sentences to peaceful protestors following the 2009 election;

Whereas during the trial, Saeed Abedini and his Iranian attorney were barred from attending portions of the trial in which the prosecution provided and the judge received evidence through witness testimony;

Whereas Saeed Abedini has been sentenced to 8 years in prison in Iran after being tried for his religious beliefs;

Whereas in August 2013, the 36th branch of the Tehran appeals court denied Saeed Abedini's appeal and affirmed his 8-year sentence;

Whereas the Government of Iran continues to indefinitely imprison Saeed Abedini for peacefully exercising his faith and recently moved Saeed Abedini to a prison for convicted murderers and rapists;

Whereas the Government of Iran is reportedly denying Saeed Abedini needed medication for injuries he received from repeated beatings in prison;

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

Whereas Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance" and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights enshrines religious freedom in international law;

Whereas the International Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights holds that every individual shall be free from arbitrary arrest and detention, and that every individual bears the right to have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense and to be present during the duration of his trial;

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Whereas the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights further guarantees every individual the right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal;

Whereas articles 13 and 23 through 27 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran provide for freedom of expression, assembly, and association, as well as the freedom to practice one's religion;

Whereas in October 2012, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran noted a wide range of human rights violations, including illegal limits on freedom of expression, failures of legal due process, attacks on freedom of religion, and the wrongful imprisonment of children;

Whereas Iran is a religiously diverse society and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran reports that religious minorities, including Nematullahi Sufi Muslims, Sunnis, Baha'is, and Christians, face human rights violations in Iran;

Whereas in recent years, there has been an increase in the number of incidents of Iranian authorities raiding religious services, detaining worshipers and religious leaders, and harassing and threatening minority religious members; and

Whereas Saeed Abedini has exhausted all legal appeals within Iran and awaits action by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei: Now, therefore, be it

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

That the House of Representatives—

- 1 (1) condemns the Government of Iran for its
- 2 persecution of religious minorities, including Saeed
- 3 Abedini;
- 4 (2) calls on the Government of Iran to comply
- 5 with its international legal obligations and release
- 6 Saeed Abedini to the United States; and
- 7 (3) calls on the United States Government to
- 8 work aggressively for the quick release of Saeed
- 9 Abedini by designating additional Iranian officials,
- 10 as appropriate, for human rights abuses pursuant to
- 11 section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions,
- 12 Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010.

